

Australian Volleyball Schools Cup 2012 Heathfield High School

Heathfield High School took a record 26 teams to the 29th Australian Volleyball Schools Cup last week with outstanding results. The Special Interest Volleyball (SIV) Squad were once again successful on the national stage in Melbourne – bringing home to the Adelaide Hills the Gerflor Cup as the most successful school competing at the championships.

Heathfield High School has now been competing in this tournament in all 29 years, and up until this week had amassed a record setting 63 national titles. The competition has grown from just 34 teams in 1984 to a record 471 teams this year from 139 schools, from all states of Australia and overseas and compete in both boys and girls across four divisions. The elite Honours Divisions command the most contributing points to the coveted Gerflor Cup, of which there are four per gender – Open, U17, U16 and U15. From there, divisions 1, 2, and 3 in each age group exist for every team to find its place in the tournament.

In the 8 Honour divisions, Heathfield achieved Gold in U17 boys, Gold in U16 boys, Silver in U15 girls, Bronze in Open boys and Bronze in U15 boys and won back the overall schools cup to reclaim the title of the best Volleyball school in Australia. Heathfield also gained a Gold and a Bronze in U15 Div 1 boys and Silver in U15 div 1 girls.

Jamie Belsole, a member of the Heathfield U17 Honours girls team, started the week with an amazing rendition of the National Anthem in front of a packed stadium, filling the Aquatics section of the Melbourne Sports and Aquatics Centre. Over 2,000 people were completely mesmerized by her performance followed by a spontaneous and sustained applause by every single person present. They all felt they had witnessed something very special.

Also presented at the opening ceremony was a 20 year service award to Ian Scarborough, 15 year awards to Indra Reinpuu and Tanya Fischer and 10 year awards to Amy Allen and Brian Kempe for their years of attendance at the Australian Schools Cup.

The week of games started very well with most teams achieving wins early in the competition setting up a solid start for the squad. By Wednesday many teams were in the top half of their competition with several ensuring a top six spot. Thursday in the Honours divisions the open boys won a spot in the semi final defeating St Bernards in the morning and in the afternoon played the Semi final. In an epic close fought battle the lads went down to the eventual winners Aquinas. The open girls played outstanding volleyball to defeat Rossmoyne but did not have enough premiership points for a top 4 spot but finished a credible sixth place in Australia. The U17 boys and the U15 girls won their semis to go straight into their grand finals while the U16 and U15 boys still had to play their semi finals Friday morning. Friday saw several Heathfield v Mazenod matches with the Open boys taking bronze with a 3-1 win over Mazenod, the U15 boys lost the semi final to eventual winners Mazenod in a classic 5 setter but were able to grab bronze from Brighton 3-0. The U16 boys won a place in the final with a 3-0 win over Billanook and then defeated Mazenod 3-0 for gold.

The U15 Honour girls reversed their minor round clash with Nambour with a 3-1 win in the semi final to have another go at the undefeated Brown Plains State High School from Queensland. The first two sets went to the powerful and polished Browns Plains but the Heathfield squad started to gather from watching other finals and the girls dug in deep to win the next two sets to be the first team for the week to take them to five sets. To the credit of the players from Queensland, they held their nerve to win the fifth set, despite an energy filled atmosphere with around 300 people cheering in close quarters for the young Heathfield girls.

The closing ceremony followed with the 8 teams receiving their medals and Ben Williamson from U16 boys and Simon Gray from the U17 boy's teams received most valuable player awards. Also Jake McIntyre won a scholarship for being the best referee in the competition. It was always going to be extremely tight for the overall schools cup as Eltham had several Honour teams in grand finals including the Open boys and Open girls which are worth more points than the other age groups. Scores were read from 8th place and it was mentioned if Eltham had won just one of their finals then the order of the final three teams would have been different, it was that close. The squad erupted when the

announcement was finally made that Heathfield had won the schools cup. Regaining the cup rewarded the hard work by the volleyball staff, Lachlan Abbott, Mia Heikkonen, Mark Nielsen and Sheena Peters, all of the coaches who are all ex Heathfield students and of course the players. Brighton were second and Eltham a very close third. The squad fully appreciate the support of Bakers Delight, the parents throughout the year with the entire out of school hour's commitments and for the rest of the school community for their massive support for the Special Interest Volleyball program. School Principal Alistair Brown, flew to Melbourne for the last 2 days of completion. In speaking to the squad at their Friday night presentation function, all participants were acknowledged, thanked and commended on the week's effort, performances and success.

Some 220 players, 26 coaches – most of which are ex HHS SIV members, 26 managers and some additional logistical and administration staff participate in and coordinate the trip. Travelling back overnight last Friday night, the 6 busloads were greeted rousingly by waiting parents and well-wishers on Saturday morning in the car park of the Mt Lofty Community Sports Centre (on the grounds of HHS), as sleepy but very happy players emerged from the buses to return home and recover.

A review of 2012 will occur once the dust has settled on Christmas, when the New Year will bring about planning and revised strategies for the new squad to strive to repeat its 2012 success in 2013.

Stuart Scott
SIV Program Manager

Full Squad results

Boys

Open Hon	3 rd
Open Div 1	6 th
U17 Honour	1 st
U17 Div 1	10 th
U16 Hon	1 st
U16 Div 1 (1)	10 th
U16 Div 1 (2)	9 th
U16 Div 2	12 th
U15 Hon	3 rd
U15 Div 1 (1)	1 st
U15 Div 1 (2)	9 th
U15 Div 1 (3)	3 rd
U15 Div 2 (1)	15 th
U15 Div 2 (2)	7 th

Girls

Open Hon	6 th
Open Div 1	6 th
U17 Hon	8 th
U17 Div 1	11 th
U16 Hon	8 th
U16 Div 1	11 th
U16 Div 2	7 th
U15 Hon	2 nd
U15 Div 1	2 nd
U15 Div 2 (1)	13 th
U15 Div 2 (2)	21 st
U14 Div 1	4 th